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IN THE CLAIMS:

1.-2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) A pyrotechnically unlockable mechanical linking device between first and second mechanical elements for ~~receiving~~ separation from each other by tensile and/or compressive forces along a first axis, said device comprising:

first and second mechanical elements;

at least one pyrotechnic component;

retention means for release by pressure of gases generated by igniting the pyrotechnic component; and

at least one locking means having an axial bore and linking together said first and second mechanical elements by applying a linking force along at least a second axis, said locking means for release when the mechanical elements are subjected to tensile and/or compressive forces along said first axis and held in a locking position by said retention means, wherein:

the retention means comprise a piston having a first external surface and for sliding in said axial bore in response

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to gas pressure generated by the pyrotechnic component, the locking means ~~being in releasable locking engagement~~ releasably engaged with the first external surface of the piston, which ensures retention of the locking means in the locking position for unitary movement of said first and second mechanical elements,

the locking means are linked with said first mechanical element and comprise at least one first surface having a profile for co-operating with a second surface having a matching profile integral with said first mechanical element, the locking means also delimiting at least partially the axial bore for slidably receiving the piston, and the locking means comprise:

a tube portion integral with one end of the locking means for retaining the second mechanical element; and

at least two deformable tips integral with an opposite end of the locking means, said tips having external profiles and each tip comprising said first surface having at least one profile co-operating with the matching profile of said second surface, said second surface integral with the first mechanical

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element, said tips delimiting the axial bore for slidably receiving the piston.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Previously Presented) The unlockable mechanical linking device according to Claim 3, wherein the pyrotechnic component is integral with the piston.

6. (Previously Presented) The unlockable mechanical linking device according to Claim 5, wherein the axial bore delimited by the deformable tips further comprises a chamber for receiving gas pressure of gas generated by ignition of the pyrotechnic component.

7. (Previously Presented) The unlockable mechanical linking device according to Claim 5, wherein:

said first mechanical element further comprises a first seat for retaining the deformable tips,

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the piston further comprises a second external surface of a diameter less than a diameter of the first seat for retaining the tips, said second external surface having an axial length at least equal to a length of said tips, thereby allowing the tips to bend toward the piston, such bending allowing the external profile of the tips to disengage from said matching profile of said matching second surface after the piston moves in response to gas pressure.

8. (Previously Presented) The unlockable mechanical linking device according to Claim 7, wherein the second external surface is delimited on at one end by a collar for guiding the piston with respect to an internal surface of the chamber.

9. (Previously Presented) The unlockable mechanical linking device according to Claim 8, wherein the chamber comprises a groove located at one end thereof for receiving the collar after the piston moves in response to gas pressure.

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10. (Previously Presented) The unlockable mechanical linking device according to Claim 7, wherein the first seat for retaining the deformable tips comprises a rib for co-operating with a groove located in the surface of the axial bore for axially retaining the piston.

11. (Previously Presented) The unlockable mechanical linking device according to Claim 3, wherein said device comprises at least three deformable tips evenly spaced angularly.

12.-29. (Cancelled)